



NATIVE CHILD
AND FAMILY SERVICES
OF TORONTO

Decolonizing Child Welfare Learning Series #3

ONGOING SERVICES

Agenda

1. Opening
2. Jeffrey Schiffer
3. Miguel Torres
4. Jamie Toguri
5. Perspectives from Jamie & Miguel
6. Mark Atanasoff
7. Vivian Roy
8. Questions



Jeffrey Schiffer





Miguel Torres



Conclusion of Investigation



Example

Neighbor
called the
agency

Mom,
Unable to
safely care
for a young
child

Child safe
in the least
intrusive
way
possible



Provide Support

Work with the mom to learn about her extended family who could come and help

Assess what support the mom might need to resume caring for her baby on her own

Connect mom with our holistic healing services

Build a safety network around mom and child



Eligible for Ongoing Service

Verify the original concern that a child was left unsupervised

Caregiver has a problem (substance misuse) that compromises her ability to safely care for her child without support

When concerns are verified at the end of the investigation assessment, a case becomes eligible to remain open for ongoing services



Ongoing Service

A concern might be verified, but sufficient safety interventions and ongoing healing and prevention supports established so that the family does not need to stay open

If we believe that more needs to be done after our initial involvement at intake and assessment, then we will keep a case open for ongoing services

We would make the decision to keep the file open until we could be sure that the mother was sufficiently supported that the child would be safe without our involvement



Jamie Toguri



Transferring To Another Worker

“immediate response” workers (urgent cases that need to be investigated within 12 to 24 hours) and then need to be transferred to another worker

The transfer process has assigned timelines that must be followed. The purpose of these standards is to make sure that a family or children are not ignored and do not fall through the cracks while all the work to transfer to a new worker is completed

In most cases, because most referrals are not coded for immediate response under the Eligibility Spectrum, the worker who does the initial investigation, safety planning and assessment will also stay with the family for ongoing services.

Standards

When a case goes to ongoing services, the focus remains on protecting children and engaging families in services and other community supports in order to reduce the likelihood of future harm to a child

Ongoing services are also provided in accordance with standards that come with having a provincial child welfare mandate

The intent of the standards is to ensure that a collaborative and respectful assessment of the family's strengths and needs is done and a service plan developed to reduce risk to children.



Family Engagement

The standard promotes the engagement of the family during the assessment, service planning and decision-making processes

Emphasis is placed on ensuring the family understands the child protection concerns, the outcome of all assessments, what their child protection worker and all others participating in the service plan will do to resolve the child protection concerns, and how the family's progress will be measured.

For the small number of cases where a child has been brought into care for their safety, there is also a continuous focus on the child's need for a safe, stable, reliable and permanent placement, preferably with the child's own family.



Strengths and Needs Assessment

Our Child and family Wellbeing teams work to help families make changes or access supports so that child welfare services are no longer needed.

An assessment of the family's and the child's strengths and needs is completed on every case receiving ongoing protection service before the development of the service plan

The results of the family and child strengths and needs assessment are discussed with the family during the service planning process.



Service Plan

When we work with a family we develop a service plan in collaboration with the family

We include the child, family and a circle of support chosen by the family and child themselves.

We work to help the family build their own support networks as well as make referrals to our own culture based healing and prevention services and other services in the community that may be needed



Service Plan

The standard for an initial service plan requires that we set specific goals, objectives and activities including persons responsible and timeframes for completion

While providing ongoing services, the minimum standard for visits with families in their home is once per month.

how often we see families depends on the needs of the child and family and on the amount of attention needed to do the important work of building safety and a sustainable support network around a family.



Interviews and Visits

We are also required to interview the children in the family privately at least every month either at home or in another setting such as a school.

We observe children too young to be interviewed in their own home environment and as they interact with their parent/caregiver.

There are also occasions when the standards require that we make unannounced visits to the family home. Sometimes this is just because it is not possible to contact the family to arrange an appointment.



Supervision and Reviews

Every ongoing child protection case is reviewed as often as is necessary, but at minimum in a supervision session once every six weeks

Every six months ongoing cases are formally reviewed by the worker and supervisor using standard risk assessment tools including a risk reassessment tool and an assessment of the family's and the child's strengths and needs.

If the file involves a family with a child in care a reunification assessment is also completed which includes a reassessment of risk, an assessment of the quality and frequency of access, and an assessment of safety of the environment to which the child is being returned



Band Representative

The Service Plan for the family is also updated with the involvement of the family.

When we work with a family, we make sure to involve extended family members, relatives or other family support persons including a representative chosen by the child's Band.

When there is a child in care, we work to conduct a thorough, continuous search for persons who may commit to participation in a permanent plan for the child if it is not safe to return a child to their parent or caregiver.



Legal

Customary
Care
Agreement

Approach to
initiating
legal
proceedings

Decide when
to close a
legal file

If a child is
made a
permanent
ward

If parental
rights have
been
terminated



Decision to close services

The decision to terminate child protection services is made based on observable changes in behavior and family functioning which indicate a low risk of future child protection concerns.

The standard emphasizes that closing a family's file should be a process of transition in which we gradually decrease the intensity of intrusive interventions

the family gradually assumes full responsibility for the safety and well-being of its children using their own resources and support networks

Decision to close services

Before closing a case, the child protection worker reviews the case with the family, service providers, the family's support network and a supervisor.

The decision to terminate provision of child protection services is made by the worker in consultation with the approval of a supervisor.



The following minimum criteria must be met when a decision is made to close the case:

There have been no recent occurrences of child abuse or maltreatment

There is no evidence of current or imminent safety threats

A recent risk reassessment confirms that factors that were identified as contributing toward risk in the earlier risk assessment/risk reassessment documents no longer exist, or have been reduced significantly

At the time of termination of service, the family should be able to demonstrate:

Specific and measurable behavioral improvements in the areas identified in the service plan

The ability to access and use formal and informal resources to assist them in problem solving



Accessing Service in Community

the child protection worker has a final meeting with the child and family and discusses with the family a plan for accessing services in the community to meet individual or family needs in the future

We discuss with the family the services and supports they will need to prevent future risk to their child and ensure that the family is engaged with needed services.





Jamie & Miguel





Mark Atanasoff



Reform Pillars

Reduce
Stigma

Journey with Community

Community
Programs as
a System

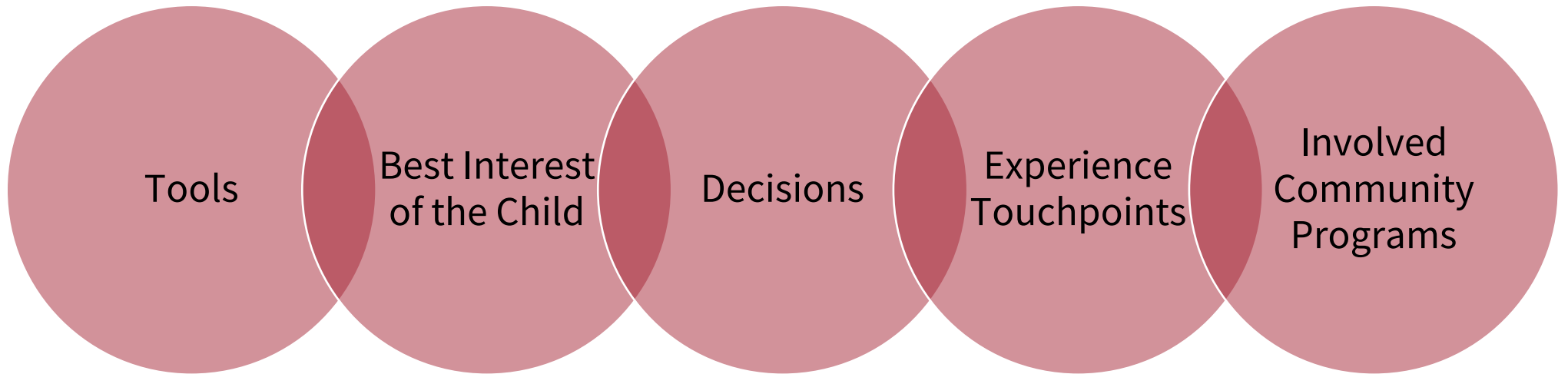
Reducing Children in Care

Child
Welfare
Reform

Improving Experiences



Potential Reform Opportunities



Indigenous world view



Vivian Roy





Questions





Miigwetch!



Ongoing

